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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/016,437	12/10/2001	Nader Dutta	594-25576	5333
7590	09/13/2007		EXAMINER	
Jeffrey E. Griffin WesternGeco Intellectual Property Department 10001 Richmond Ave. Houston, TX 77042			JONES, HUGH M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2128	
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			09/13/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Advisory Action Before the Filing of an Appeal Brief	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/016,437	DUTTA ET AL.
	Examiner Hugh Jones	Art Unit 2128

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

THE REPLY FILED 04 September 2007 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE.

1. The reply was filed after a final rejection, but prior to or on the same day as filing a Notice of Appeal. To avoid abandonment of this application, applicant must timely file one of the following replies: (1) an amendment, affidavit, or other evidence, which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee) in compliance with 37 CFR 41.31; or (3) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114. The reply must be filed within one of the following time periods:

a) The period for reply expires _____ months from the mailing date of the final rejection.
b) The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.

Examiner Note: If box 1 is checked, check either box (a) or (b). ONLY CHECK BOX (b) WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

NOTICE OF APPEAL

2. The Notice of Appeal was filed on _____. A brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.37 must be filed within two months of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal (37 CFR 41.37(a)), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 41.37(e)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal. Since a Notice of Appeal has been filed, any reply must be filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 41.37(a).

AMENDMENTS

3. The proposed amendment(s) filed after a final rejection, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because

(a) They raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);
(b) They raise the issue of new matter (see NOTE below);
(c) They are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or
(d) They present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: _____. (See 37 CFR 1.116 and 41.33(a)).

4. The amendments are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. See attached Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (PTOL-324).

5. Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): _____.

6. Newly proposed or amended claim(s) _____ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).

7. For purposes of appeal, the proposed amendment(s): a) will not be entered, or b) will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.

The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:

Claim(s) allowed: _____.
Claim(s) objected to: _____.
Claim(s) rejected: _____.
Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: _____.

AFFIDAVIT OR OTHER EVIDENCE

8. The affidavit or other evidence filed after a final action, but before or on the date of filing a Notice of Appeal will not be entered because applicant failed to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why the affidavit or other evidence is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 1.116(e).

9. The affidavit or other evidence filed after the date of filing a Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because the affidavit or other evidence failed to overcome all rejections under appeal and/or appellant fails to provide a showing a good and sufficient reasons why it is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 41.33(d)(1).

10. The affidavit or other evidence is entered. An explanation of the status of the claims after entry is below or attached.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/OTHER

11. The request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because:
See Continuation Sheet.

12. Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s). (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s). _____

13. Other: _____.

Continuation of 11. does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: Applicant's arguments are not persuasive. It is noted that many arguments have been presented earlier. To the extent that they are repeated, please see the final rejection.

The claims require further search and consideration. The scope of claim 1, as amended, is substantially changed:

Claim 1 now incorporates the limitations of both claims 23-24, whereas neither were incorporated simultaneously (prior to amendment, the limitations of either claim 23 or claim 24, but not both, were incorporated into claim 1 by virtue of their exclusive dependencies);

Furthermore, the scope has changed because of the manner in which the combined limitations of claims 23-24 have been incorporated into claim 1. The post-stack inversion using the AVO intercept is now applied prior to the computation of the poisson ratio and prior to identification of the risk, whereas it was previously applied subsequent to said steps (this is not the same as in claim 26). Furthermore, note that claim 1 now allows for either the pre- or post-stack analysis (which may raise 112-2 issues) to be used for the determination of the ratio (note that claim 26 requires that post-stack analysis leads to calculation of the ratio).

Also, the record should be clarified to show that claims 23-24 are amended and not canceled, as suggested in arguments on page 10 (second full paragraph)

Applicants reliance upon KSR is abstract and misplaced. It is noted that the "rigid" pre-KSR TSM test was applied, including "articulated reasoning" and express motivations from the applied art. The rejections did not rely upon the more relaxed KSR test. In any case, Applicants are silent in response to the merits of the TSM test.

With reference to KRS:

"Graham provided an expansive and flexible approach to the obviousness question that is inconsistent with the way the Federal Circuit applied its TSM test here. Neither §103's enactment nor Graham's analysis disturbed the Court's earlier instructions concerning the need for caution in granting a patent based on the combination of elements found in the prior art. See Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. v. Supermarket Equipment Corp., 340 U. S. 147, 152. Such a combination of familiar elements according to known methods is likely to be obvious when it does no more than yield predictable results. See, e.g., United States v. Adams, 383 U. S. 39, 50-52. When a work is available in one field, design incentives and other market forces can prompt variations of it, either in the same field or in another. If a person of ordinary skill in the art can implement a predictable variation, and would see the benefit of doing so, §103 likely bars its patentability. Moreover, if a technique has been used to improve one device, and a person of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that it would improve similar devices in the same way, using the technique is obvious unless its actual application is beyond that person's skill. A court must ask whether the improvement is more than the predictable use of prior-art elements according to their established functions. Following these principles may be difficult if the claimed subject matter involves more than the simple substitution of one known element for another or the mere application of a known technique to a piece of prior art ready for the improvement. To determine whether there was an apparent reason to combine the known elements in the way a patent claims, it will often be necessary to look to interrelated teachings of multiple patents; to the effects of demands known to the design community or present in the marketplace; and to the background knowledge possessed by a person having ordinary skill in the art. To facilitate review, this analysis should be made explicit. But it need not seek out precise teachings directed to the challenged claim's specific subject matter, for a court can consider the inferences and creative steps a person of ordinary skill in the art would employ. Pp. 11-14."

It is noted that Applicants have, in the background of the specification, disclosed known problems in the art, including, for example, identification of SWF areas.

It is known to identify SWF areas and hazards, to use pre- or post-stack techniques to obtain poisson ratios, and to use AVO techniques, for example, in the same context. KSR said that "[w]hen there is a design need or market pressure to solve a problem and there are a finite number of identified, predictable solutions, a person of ordinary skill has good reason to pursue the known options within his or her technical grasp. ... In that instance the fact that a combination was obvious to try might show that it was obvious....

"Granting patent protection to advances that would occur in the ordinary course without real innovation retards progress and may, in the case of patents combining previously known elements, deprive prior inventions of their value or utility." (Slip Op., 15)

"Second, and most important, the Court looked at the "person of ordinary skill" in a new light. Rather than assuming that an ordinary skilled person would not create something new unless taught, suggested or motivated to do so, the Supreme Court emphasized that those of "ordinary skill" working in a field are likely to make many advances that are obvious: "[A] person of ordinary skill in the art is also a person of ordinary creativity, not an automaton." (Slip Op., 17).

"[A] person of ordinary skill has good reason to pursue the known options within his or her technical grasp. If this leads to the anticipated success, it is likely the product not of innovation but of ordinary skill and common sense." (Slip Op., 17).


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